Polaris 'Leak' To Congress Under Probe

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The Pentagon has launched an investigation, including requests that "suspects" take lie detector tests, to find out who gave Congress information about the proposal to sink the Navy's older Polaris submarines.

Some backers of the ABM (anti-ballistic-missile) in Congress fear the investigation may become a side issue because of its focus on punishing defense personnel who supply information to the lawmakers outside of official channels.

A spokesman for Chairman John Stennis (D-Miss.) of the Senate Armed Services Committee, when queried about the Pentagon security probe, said, "We are aware of the case and are now collecting the facts from some of the people involved."

Senate sources said yesterday that they have received complaints of harassment and pressure from Pentagon personnel under investigation.

The security investigation was prompted by a Washington Post story of May 23 which revealed that Pentagon civilian analysts had proposed sinking the oldest 10 of the Navy's 41 Polaris submarines to save money. The document making the case for this option was secret.

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Pentagon Probing 'Leak' to Congress

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An offcial from the Office of Naval Intelligence who said the investigation was being conducted for the office of the Secretary of Defense questioned the Post on the story. But the investigation within the Pentagon itself has gone far beyond straight questioning, according to those involved.

Daniel Z. Henkin, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, said "an investigation into this unauthorized circulation of the classified document is being conducted. This action is consistent with our responsibility to protect classified defense information.

"Throughout the investigation," Henkin added, "the rights of all individuals have been fully protected at all times." He said "no individual" was given a lie detector test "at any time." His statement did not deny that such tests were requested, as some of the people under investigation claim.

Robert F. Froehlke, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Administration, heads the Pentagon's Directorate for Inspection Services, which is conducting the investigation.

The pattern of the security probe, according to complaints lodged with Congress to date, has followed these lines:

- The copies of the submarine sinking document, which originated with the Pentagon's civilian Systems Analysis Office, were collected in one place by intelligence officials and studied for any tell-tale marks, like paper clip indentations. Then a search was conducted among "our own friends" in Congress for a copy of the document in hopes of matching it up with one of the copies in the Pentagon.
- Investigators claimed, according to informed sources, that they obtained a copy of the document from Congress. The Pentagon personnel who had initialed the document were put under suspicion.
- "More than 12 people" from two different offices in the Pentagon were told to sign a statement which showed they had been apprised that they were suspected of passing classified information to Congress.
- The "suspects" were warned that they could be prosecuted. The investigators urged the person who had passed the document outside the building to admit it.
- The "suspects" were to write down the names of persons they knew in Congress and the Pentagon.
- The "suspects" were asked to sign a statement that they had not passed the document to anyone in Congress.
- At least one officer was called back to Wa[illegible]on from the Reserve Officers Association convention in Las Vegas, held June 25-28, to face Pentagon interrogators.
- A room was set up in the Pentagon with one officer inside so the guilty person could confess in private.
- Investigators asked David Packard, deputy Secretary of Defense, if the "suspects" could be required to take lie detector tests. He said only if they volunteered to take them.
- The interrogations were intense, with at least one "suspect" complaining he had been questioned six different times.